## BETHLEHEM LUTHERAN CHURCH

# CHIMES Newsletter

OCTOBER 2023 VOLUME 85, ISSUE 10

#### MESSAGE FROM THE PASTOR

Greetings and peace be with you!

Here we are with October upon us already! Where did September go? This month we have some exciting milestones coming up, including another class of confirmands affirming their faith on Reformation Sunday, Oct. 29<sup>th</sup>! Please join us in celebrating this class of confirmands in worship on this day!

Another event we have coming up this month is on Sunday, Oct. 15th where we will be having a congregational meeting to vote on the adoption of our new strategic plan which includes a new vision statement, a new mission statement, and some goals/directions for us to focus on as a community. Since this process has been taking place over a long period of time, I wanted to take a little time to remind all of us what this process is all for and how it is going to help us in the future. But before we get into the details, I want to extend a thank you to all those that have been involved in this process. Thank you to Carol Pulsfus, Jerry Saalsaa, Kerry Melby, Geoff Gilbert, Julie Saalsaa, and Janice Petersen for their work on the ground in planning, steering, and supporting this process every step of the way. Thank you to the council members both previous and current who have been working and leading through this process faithfully. And a big thank you to all of you for showing up to dreaming sessions, for participating throughout the process, and providing your valuable insights. And last, but certainly not least, I want to give thanks to God who has been walking with us every step of the way and for the Spirit who will continue to guide us as a community. We would not be where we are today if it weren't for each and every one of you. With the deepest of gratitude, I want to say, "thank you."

Now, let us look into the details of this process and what it means for our future. Firstly, you may be wondering, what is a vision statement? A vision statement is a compelling picture of a preferred future that motivates us to act. Our new proposed <u>vision statement</u> is "**God's family working together to welcome all**." This is what we hope to see in the future and a reality we are working towards creating. A mission statement is focused on why we exist/our purpose as a church. Our new proposed <u>mission statement</u> is "**Bethlehem Lutheran Church is a growing community where we love inclusively, welcome, serve, and thrive through our relationship with God**." These statements offer us a purpose and a future to move towards together. By being united in where



#### UPCOMING EVENTS

OCTOBER 11 Food Pantry Helpers

OCTOBER 12 9:00 am Women's Group

#### OCTOBER 15

10:00 am Congregational Meeting -Vote on new Vision and Mission Statement

#### OCTOBER 19

6:30 pm Church Council OCTOBER 26 Lifeline Community Screening OCTOBER 28 2 pm to 4 pm Trunk or Treat OCTOBER 29

Reformation Sunday 9:00 am Worship with Confirmation

#### Bethlehem Lutheran Church, ELCA

W8267 Hwy 33 East Portage, WI 53901 608-742-8502 Email: office@blcportage.org www.bethlehemLCportage.org we are going and following God's lead, we can go so much further than we could on our own.

I want to invite you to take a closer look at the proposed strategic plan which is included in this newsletter and reflect on the fruits of this process. I would ask that you spend some time with God in prayer over this plan, the future of Bethlehem, and the ways you will be a part of this. Finally, I would ask you to come and participate in our congregational meeting on Oct. 15<sup>th</sup> as well. I hope to see you there!

May the Lord bless you and keep you this day and always.

In peace, Pastor Jaime Benson

#### PROPOSED STRATEGIC PLAN

#### Vision:

God's family working together to welcome all.

#### Mission:

Bethlehem Lutheran Church is a growing community where we love inclusively, welcome, serve, and thrive through our relationship with God.

We will grow in our relationship with God.

- Pray
- Practice Sabbath
- Share stories
- Explore spiritual practices

Every relationship we treasure requires a personal investment and courage to be open and accepting, and a relationship with God is no different. Through new and existing educational and fellowship opportunities for all ages, individuals and the congregation together will commit to learning of, listening to and sharing God's word. Our deeper relationship with God will lead us in all aspects of our personal and church lives.

#### We will grow in our relationship with our neighbors and our community.

- Listen
- Practice hospitality
- Be present
- Explore ways to engage with and provide for others

Cultivating deep and diverse relationships with our neighbors, both near and far, will guide us to be the hands and feet of God, doing what we are called to do in service to those around us. We will open our hearts and our doors to welcome the community, as well as venture out to meet those who need our help. Opportunities to share God's love are everywhere. We will grow our financial sustainability.

- Give
- Practice Stewardship
- Communicate regularly
- Explore additional resources and income

Our financial plan will acknowledge the importance of budgeting, planning, prioritizing and generating funds to balance a need to prepare for the unexpected while strategizing for future growth. We will focus on sound financial practices and controls to build our general reserves and increase new revenue streams in order to care for and maintain our building and property while providing for the mission and ministry of Bethlehem Lutheran Church.

#### Growing our Relationship with God

We will start to record options and numbers of people who participate in activities for spiritual growth.

We will continue to evaluate the variety of options to worship.

#### Growing our Relationship with Community

We will track our events and numbers of people involved to evaluate community reach and impact.

We will continue to evaluate Bethlehem's relationship with our neighbors.

#### **Financial Sustainability**

Bethlehem Lutheran Church will continue to replenish our general reserves with a profit of at least \$5,000 per year and generate enough building-designated funds to maintain our church and grounds.

Commit to the Lord whatever

you do, and He will establish your

plans.

Proverbs 16:3

### OUR CHURCH

#### TRUNK OR TREAT



Saturday, Oct. 28th 2 to 4 pm Here's how it works: Decorate your trunk (avoid scary). Gather in the church parking lot as children trick or treat

from car to car.

This event is open to the community. Encourage your family, friends and neighbors to come trick or treat with their children in this safe, fun environment. For any questions please contact Lisa Cook.

#### WOMEN'S GROUP



Members of the Women's Group enjoyed an outing to Olbrich Botanical Gardens on September 14<sup>th</sup>. Next meeting is October 12<sup>th</sup> at 9 am.

#### GIFTS OF BETHLEHEM

The Gifts of Bethlehem concert will be held on Sunday December 3<sup>rd</sup> at 9 am. If you are interested in participating, please contact Tania Anderson.

#### FROM THE CHURCH OFFICE CHAIRS FOR SALE

New chairs have been ordered for the fellowship hall. We will be selling the current chairs once the new ones arrive. Chairs will be \$5 each or 3 for \$10.

Please contact the church office if you are interested in purchasing chairs.

#### PARISH ASSOCIATE UPDATE

Although I have truly enjoyed the work that I have been doing as the Parish Associate at Bethlehem Lutheran, I am going to need to step back from my responsibilities moving forward. I have always known that the longevity of my position would be determined by the health of my family and my caretaking responsibilities, and the time has come for me to make a change. You will still see me, however, helping out with the confirmation/youth programs, the Gifts of Bethlehem, and the ecumenical Vacation Bible School program in the summer. I will always be around, helping out as time allows. Thank you for continuing to support the educational programs at BLC! We will continue to find new ways to expand our programming for the youth and adults in our community.

With love, Tania Anderson

## FAITH FORMATION

We are excited to start this Sunday School year and grateful for those returning. Thank you to all who have signed up for Sunday school. There are still some openings if you have not signed up.

See the sign-up sheet on the Sunday School bulletin board.

On October 15<sup>th</sup> during the service, the 4<sup>th</sup> Graders will receive their Bibles and the children will be singing.

This year we will be having class on the 1<sup>st</sup> and 3rd Sundays of the Month we will have music and lesson. October 1<sup>st</sup> our lesson will be The Chief Priests, Matthew 21:23-32 October 15<sup>th</sup> our lesson will be The Wedding Banquet, Matthew 22:1-14.

We are collecting pop tops for the Ronald McDonald house and food for the food pantry.

Please feel free to talk to any Sunday school staff if you have any questions or you can call Jeanette.

## Bethlehem Lutheran Church 🖉

#### **Profit and Loss Comparison**

September 1-20, 2023

	TOTAL						
	SEP 1-20, 2023	SEP 1-20, 2022 (PY)	AUG 1-20, 2023 (PP)	JAN 1 • SEP 20, 2023 (YTD)	JAN 1 • SEP 20, 2022 (PY YTD)		
+ Income				1.			
▶ Income	15,064.83	16,955.15	12,473.81	196,060.18	209,933.33		
▶ Other Income	650.00	1,372.67	80.04	49,161.56	10,841.64		
Total Income	\$15,714.83	\$18,327.82	\$12,553.85	\$245,221.74	\$220,774.97		
GROSS PROFIT	\$15,714.83	\$18,327.82	\$12,553.85	\$245,221.74	\$220,774.97		
▶ Expenses	\$10,448.03	\$14,556.90	\$17,903.96	\$228,907.03	\$197,087.85		
NET OPERATING INCOME	\$5,266.80	\$3,770.92	\$ -5,350.11	\$16,314.71	\$23,687.12		
▶ Other Income	\$0.00	\$3,750.00	\$1,300.00	\$22,215.00	\$24,931.09		
▶ Other Expenses	\$0.00	\$2,784.00	\$741.75	\$21,652.69	\$23,206.83		
NET OTHER INCOME	\$0.00	\$966.00	\$558.25	\$562.31	\$1,724.26		
NET INCOME	\$5,266.80	\$4,736.92	\$-4,791.86	\$16,877.02	\$25,411.38		

Cash basis Wednesday, September 20, 2023 09:37 AM GMT-05:00

Date	Usher	Reader	Video Production	Communion Assistant	Communion Assistant	Altar Guild	Acolyte	Music	Coffee Hour
Sun 10/1 9 am	Marie Rohrbacher	Nancy Loether	Ben Rudolph	040	Sue Conner	Sue Conner			
Flowers: Brad	& Lisa Cook 2	5th Wedding A	nniversary						
Wed 10/4 5:30 pm					Cheryl Hebel	Cheryl Hebel			
Sun 10/8 9am	Bonnie Dixon	Bonnie Dixon	040	010	Marie Kucksdorf	Marie Kucksdorf			
Flowers: Trav	is & Cara Drucl	kery 25th Wed	ding Anniversa	iry					
Wed 10/11 5:30 pm					Judy Donahue	Judy Donahue			
Sun 10/15 9am	Kory Anderson	Lisa Cook	Brady and Lori Cox	010	Lisa Cook	Lisa Cook			
Flowers: Dan	& Marie Kucks	dorf Wedding	Anniversary						
Wed 10/18 5:30 pm					Kathy Lawrence	Kathy Lawrence			
Sun 10/22 9am	Sandra Sween	Kerry Melby	Jeff Melby	010	Ginny Paulson	Ginny Paulson			
Flowers: Bar	b Rothwell In M	lemory of Dick	Olson						
Wed 10/25 5:30 pm					Cara Druckrey	Cara Druckrey			
Sun 10/29 9am	Ellen Kabele	Darlene Anderson	040	040	Darlene Anderson	Darlene Anderson			
Flowers: Deb	Brown Memory	of her brothe	r						



Looking for volunteers! Contact the Church office to volunteer.

## **Bethlehem Lutheran Church**

October 2023

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